DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 400 122 PS 024 720

TITLE Let's Do Homework! Learning Partners.
INSTITUTION Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC. Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination.
REPORT NO ORAD-96-1212
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 5p.; This information was taken from "Helping Your Child with Homework"; see ED 388 436.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Elementary Secondary Education; *Homework; Parent Attitudes; *Parent Influence; Parent Role; *Parent Student Relationship; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Study Habits; Television Viewing; Time Management
IDENTIFIERS Parent Commitment; *Parent Effectiveness; *Parent Expectations

ABSTRACT

Following a list of four reasons teachers assign homework, this guide discusses ways for parents to help children with successful completion of homework assignments including: (1) show that education and homework are important; (2) check on the child's work; (3) provide guidance; and (4) talk with someone at school if problems occur. The guide contains a checklist for helping children with homework which highlights the importance of providing time, space, and any necessary materials; and offers nine questions to ask their child, and six other ways to help. (AMC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 400 122

Learning Partners

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

LET'S DO HOMEWORK!

Homework can help students learn and can help parents be involved in their children's education. When parents show an interest in their child's schoolwork, they teach an important lesson—that learning is fun and worth the effort.

Children who do more homework, on average, do better in school. And, as children move up through the grades, homework becomes even more important to school success.

Teachers assign homework for many reasons. It can help children

- practice what they have learned in school;
- get ready for the next day's class;
- use resources, such as libraries and encyclopedias; and
- learn things they don't have time to learn in school.

Homework can also help children learn good habits and attitudes. It can teach children to work by themselves and encourage discipline and responsibility.

PS 024720

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Four Things You Can Do To Help Your Child With Homework

1. **Show You Think Education and Homework Are Important.** Children are more eager to do homework if they know their parents care that it gets done.

- Set a regular time for homework. The best time is one that works for your child and your family.
- Pick a place to study that is fairly quiet and has lots of light. A desk is nice. But the kitchen table or a corner of the living room can work just fine.
- Help your child concentrate by turning off the TV and saying no to social telephone calls during homework time. If you live in a small or noisy household, have all family members take part in a quiet activity during homework time. You may need to take a noisy toddler outside to play or into another room.
- Collect papers, books, pencils, and other things your child needs. Tell the teacher or school counselor or principal if you need help getting your child these things.

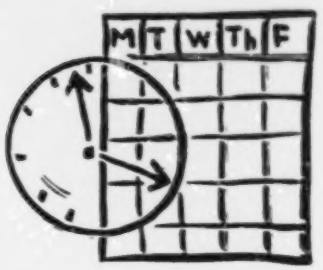
- Set a good example by reading and writing yourself. Your child learns what things are important by watching what you do. Encourage educational activities. Go on walks in the neighborhood, trips to the zoo, and encourage chores that teach responsibility.
- Read with your young child. This activity stimulates interest in reading and language and lays the foundation for your child's becoming a lifelong reader.
- Take your child to the library and encourage him to check out materials needed for homework. Talk about school and learning activities. Attend school activities, such as parent-teacher meetings and sports events.

2. **Check on Your Child's Work.** How closely you watch over homework will depend on the age of your child, how independent she is, and how well she does in school.

- Ask what the teacher expects. At the start of the school year, find out what kinds of assignments will be given and how the teacher wants you involved. Some teachers only want you to make sure the assignment is completed. Others want parents to go over the homework and point out mistakes.
- Check to see that assignments are started and finished on time. If you aren't home when the homework is finished, look it over when you get home.
- Monitor TV viewing and other activities. In most homes, more homework gets done when TV time is limited. See that things like choir or basketball don't take too much time. If homework isn't getting done, your child may need to drop an activity.

3. Provide Guidance. The basic rule in helping with homework is, "Don't do the assignment yourself. It's not your homework—it's your child's." Here are some things you can do to give guidance:

- Figure out how your child learns best. Knowing this makes it easier for you to help your child. For example, if your child learns things best when he can see them, draw a picture or a chart to help with some assignments. But if your child learns best when he can handle things, an apple cut four ways can help him learn fractions. If you've never thought about this learning style, observe your child. Check with the teacher if you aren't sure.



- Encourage good study habits. See that your child schedules enough time for assignments and makes his own practice tests at home before a test. When a big research report is coming up, encourage him to use the library.
- Talk about assignments and ask questions. This helps your child think through an assignment and break it into small, workable parts. For example, ask if she understands the assignment, whether she needs help with the work, and if her answer makes sense to her.
- Give praise. People of all ages like to be told when they have done a good job. And give helpful criticism when your child hasn't done his best work so that he can improve.

4. Talk With Someone at School If Problems Come Up. If homework problems do arise, everyone needs to work together to resolve them—the school, teachers, parents, and students.

- Call or meet with the teacher. For example, get in touch with the teacher if your child refuses to do assignments, or if you or your child can't understand the instructions, or if you can't help your child get organized to do the assignments.
- Believe that the school and the teacher want to help you and your child. Work together to fix or lessen the homework problem. Different problems require different solutions. For example:

  —Does your child have a hard time finishing assignments on time? Perhaps he has poor study skills and needs help getting organized.

  —Is the homework too hard? Maybe your child has fallen behind and needs special help from a teacher or a tutor.

  —Is she bored with the homework? Perhaps it's too easy and your child needs extra assignments that give more challenge. Or perhaps she would be more interested if another way could be found for her to learn the same material. Remember that not all homework can be expected to interest your child. Most teachers, however, want to give homework that children enjoy and can finish successfully, and they welcome comments from parents.
- Check with the teacher and with your child to make sure the plan is working.

A Checklist for Helping Your Child With Homework

Make Sure Your Child Has

- ✔ A quiet place to work with good light.
- ✔ A regular time each day for doing homework.
- ✔ Basic supplies, such as paper, pencils, pens, markers, and ruler.

Questions To Ask Your Child

- ✔ What's your assignment today?
- ✔ Is the assignment clear? (If not, suggest calling the school's homework hotline or a classmate.)
- ✔ When is it due?
- ✔ Do you need special resources (e.g., a trip to the library or access to a computer)?
- ✔ Do you need special supplies (e.g., graph paper or posterboard)?
- ✔ Have you started today's assignment? Finished it?
- ✔ Is it a longterm assignment (e.g., a term paper or science project)?
- ✔ For a major project, would it help to write out the steps or make a schedule?
- ✔ Would a practice test be useful?

Other Ways To Help

- ✔ Look over your child's homework, but don't do the work!
- ✔ Meet the teachers early in the year and find out about homework policy.
- ✔ Review teacher comments on homework that has been returned and discuss with your child.
- ✔ Observe your child's style of learning and try to understand how he works best (e.g., by using visual aids or by reading some material aloud).
- ✔ Contact the teacher if there's a homework problem you can't resolve.
- ✔ Congratulate your child on a job well done.

Resources: This information was taken from *Helping Your Child With Homework*, one of a number of publications for parents published by the U.S. Department of Education. To find out what's available and how to order, request a free *Consumer Information Catalog* from the Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

Please feel free to reproduce this information.

U.S. Department of Education
Richard W. Riley
Secretary

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Sharon P. Robinson
Assistant Secretary

Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination
Ronald W. Cartwright
Acting Director

ORAD 96–1212